

(c) and (d) Increase in requirement of petroleum products is essentially attributed to increase in economic activities in the country. Since petroleum products are important input for economic development of the country, Government is meeting full essential demand.

The effort is not to reduce supply or consumption of petroleum products but to promote their efficient and economically optimal use. The Government has initiated various steps to promote conservation of petroleum products in the transport, industrial, agricultural and domestic sectors. These include adoption of measures and practices which are conducive to increased fuel efficiency and training programme in the transport sector, modernisation of boilers, furnaces and other oil operated equipments with efficient ones and promotion of fuel efficient practices and equipment in the industrial sector, standardisation of fuel efficient irrigation pumpsets and rectification of existing pumpsets to make them more energy efficient in the agricultural sector and development as well as promotion of the use of fuel efficient equipment and appliances like kerosene and LPG stoves in the household sector. These activities are promoted and coordinated by the Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) and oil companies.

#### **Improvement in Teaching Standards**

\*154. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the University Grants Commission is proposing to increase salaries of teaching staff in colleges;

(b) whether the UGC has taken note of the falling teaching standards in the universities and colleges; if so, what are the steps taken by the UGC to improve the teaching standards; and

(c) what disciplinary steps the UGC has proposed to the universities and colleges on poor results and falling teaching standards?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI): (a) to (c) The revision of pay and allowances of college and University teachers has become due. The University Grants Commission (UGC), is currently examining the recommendations made in this behalf by a Committee appointed by it earlier. The Government will take a decision, after receiving the recommendations of the UGC in the matter. Care will be taken to ensure that the revised package of pay and allowances contains adequate provisions for maintenance and improvement of teaching standards.

The steps already initiated by the UGC for improving teaching standards in Universities and Colleges may be summarised as under:

- Academic staff colleges established for reorientation of newly appointed university and college teachers.
- 27 Curriculum Development Centres in Sciences and Humanities established to modernise curricula. Model curricula has been prepared for 27 disciplines in undergraduate and post-graduate courses.
- Financial assistance provided by UGC for improvement in teaching and research under Special Assistance Programmes, like Centres of Advanced Study (CAS), College Science Improvement Programme (COSIP), Strengthening of Infrastructure in Science and Technology (COSIST), etc.
- Inter-University Centres established by UGC to provide front-line facilities and services for advancement of research in the University system.
- Higher priority given to grant of autonomy to selected Colleges and University Departments.
- Guidelines for implementation of an Academic Calendar circulated. These guidelines emphasize observance of at least 180 teaching days by Universities/Colleges.

—Regulations for minimum standards for the award of first degree, minimum working days etc. notified by UGC.

**विश्व बैंक की सहायता से सीसायुक्त पेट्रोल को सीसा-रहित पेट्रोल में बदलना**

\*155. श्री ओम प्रकाश कोहली: क्या पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सीसायुक्त पेट्रोल को सीसा-रहित पेट्रोल में परिवर्तित करने के लिए विश्व बैंक ने भारत को सहायता देने का प्रस्ताव किया है,

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी व्यौरा क्या है, और

(ग) इस प्रस्ताव पर सरकार की क्या प्रतिक्रिया है?

**पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री (श्री जनेश्वर मिश्र):** (क) वर्तमान में विश्व बैंक ने ऐसा कोई प्रस्ताव नहीं किया है।

(ख) और (ग) प्रश्न नहीं उठता।

**News-Item Captioned "US Wheat Growers team coming"**

\*156. SHRI SOM PAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report published in the Times of India of 24th April, 1997, by Shri Kingshuk Nag saying "US wheat growers team coming".

(b) whether the team had visited the country;

(c) if so, who were the members of the team and what was the objective of their visit; and

(d) what are the details of discussions, if any, held with the team and conclusions thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) Yes, Sir. Government has seen the news-item.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) The team of US wheat experts consisted of representatives of Federal Grain Inspection Service, Grain and Feed Division of US Government, US Wheat Associates, representatives of two wheat exporting organisations viz., M/s. United Grain and M/s. Cargill. The objective of the Team was to review Indian production/import possibilities of foodgrains from US and to discuss Indian quality, health and phytosanitary requirements with reference to US Regulations on the subject. The Team held discussions in this regard with the officials of STC, FCI and representatives of the Ministry of Health, the Directorate of Plant Protection and Quarantine in the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Finance. However, no specific trade/business negotiations were held.

**LPG distributorship in Rural areas**

\*157 SHRI AKHILESH DAS: Will the MINISTER OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a massive demand for LPG cooking gas in the rural areas of the country;

(b) whether any directions have been given by Government to the Oil Marketing companies to prepare plans to provide LPG distributorship to all villages in the country;

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(d) what criterion is likely to be fixed for providing LPG distributorships in the rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) There is a growing demand for LPG in the rural areas of the country.

(b) to (d) With a view to provide LPG connections in the rural areas by opening LPG distributorships in these areas, the Government has directed the Oil Companies to prepare LPG Marketing Plan